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Title: Need to constitute a Tapioca Board with its headquarters at Salem, Tamil Nadu.

SHRI P.R. SUNDARAM(NAMAKKAL) : Tapioca is known as 'Cassava', 'Mandidca', a dry rainfed annual tuber crop. Now, it is cultivated in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and Coastal parts of Andhra Pradesh.

It is propagated through stem cutting. It can withstand arid and semi arid conditions in low marginal soils as single, inter, mixed crops. This is the main crop for the famers of the small, tiny fragmented lands in low elevated hilly regions. It also withstands disease and pest attack.

As a food stuff tuber tapioca is boiled and consumed directly. The tubers are also used as a raw material for extraction of starch and making sago (subudhana) from extracted starch.

Tapioca starch is very good source for ethanol production. It is also used in paper industry and textile industry. Tapioca Pearls commonly called sago is cooked and taken as food. For the reasons the 'MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION' of United States of America has identified that this crop 'Tapioca' will be the future crop for the third world country.

Due to several reasons the price of Tapioca has nosedived as a result of which Tapioca Farmers in Tamil Nadu, Puducheery, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh are facing huge losses. Central Government has formed Tea Board and Coffee Board for the Welfare of Tea and Coffee Farmers.

Hence, I urge upon the Central Government to constitute a Tapioca Board and save the Tapioca farmers. The Board can be set up in Salem as it is the trading centre for Tapioca products.